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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/682,255	08/09/2001	Luis Esteban Prada	9D-DW-19324	1854

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EXAMINER

LUGO, CARLOS

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3677

DATE MAILED: 06/05/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/682,255

Applicant(s)

PRADA ET AL.

Examiner

Carlos Lugo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 16-19 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 12-15 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 August 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The specification is objected to because of the following informalities:

- Page 3 Paragraph 14 Line 13, add --of the-- after closing.
- Claim 5 Line 1, add --is-- after "portion".
- Claim 8 Line 1, add --is-- after "retainer".
- Claim 9 Line 1, add --is-- after "handle".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. **Claims 1-10 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "tub assembly" in lines 8 and 9. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) The invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. **Claims 1-5 and 8-11 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Pat No 5,810,403 to Prada.

Regarding claim 1, Prada discloses a latch assembly comprising a keeper (element 26) comprising a biasing member (element 28) and a head (elements 34 and 36) extending from the biasing member. The head comprises a catch (element 34) and a lock release projection (element 36). The biasing member is configured to bias the catch for engagement with a door (element 14).

A handle (element 24) comprises a contact surface (element 48) in slidably contact with the lock release projection. The handle is selectively operable to uncouple the door from the tub assembly. A handle retainer (element 86) couples the handle to the door.

As to claim 2, Prada discloses that the latch assembly further comprises a handle hinge pin (element 44) coupled to the handle retainer.

As to claim 3, Prada discloses that the latch assembly further comprises a handle-biasing member (element 116) biasing the handle to a first position.

As to claim 4, Prada discloses that the handle-biasing member is slidable contact with the handle retainer.

As to claim 5, Prada discloses that the keeper head portion is formed integrally with the keeper-biasing member.

As to claim 8, Prada discloses that the handle retainer is fixedly attached to the door.

As to claim 9, Prada discloses that the handle is rotatably coupled to the door with the hinge pin.

As to claim 10, Prada discloses that the handle further comprises a pivot arm (element 40) comprising at least one opening (element 46) to receive the hinged pin (element 44).

As to claim 11, Prada discloses a method for assembly a door latch comprising a handle (element 24) connected to a handle retainer (element 86) and coupling a keeper (element 26) to the handle.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 16-19 are allowed.
7. Claims 12-15 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
8. Claims 6 and 7 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The patents cited further show the state of the art with respect to door latches.
10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Carlos Lugo. The examiner phone number is (703)-

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305-9747. The fax number for correspondence before a final action is (703)-872-9326 and the fax number for correspondence after final action is (703)-872-9327.

The email direction of the examiner is carlos.lugo@uspto.gov. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 9:30am to 6:30pm (EST). If the examiner is not available, please leave a message, including the application number and the examiner will answer the message as soon as possible.

May 30, 2002



ROBERT J. SANDY
PRIMARY EXAMINER